

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 – 33 are present in the application. Claims 16 and 24 have been amended.

Claims 16, 17, 22, 24, 25 and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Kelly (5,974,700). This rejection is apparently the result of a misunderstanding by Applicant and is believed to be obviated by the present amendment. Specifically, Applicant believed that the original language in claims 16 and 24 defined a unique starting position. The Examiner points out, however, in the last sentence of the rejection, that it is his belief that such is not the case. Claims 16 and 24 have now been amended to add the word “only” to thereby render these claims consistent with the language in allowed claims 31 and 33 on this issue. More particularly, claims 16 and 24 now recite that the helical key and keyway define the **only** position of the spigot relative to the receptacle at the start of the insertion of the spigot into the socket. There is no new issue presented by this amendment since this amended feature was clearly considered in the allowance of claim 31 and 33.

Accordingly, it is submitted that the amendments to claim 16 and 24 should be entered and that the claims are now patentable over Kelly (5,974,700).

Claims 17, 22, 25 and 30 ultimately depend from one or the other of independent claims 16 or 24 and are therefore allowable therewith.

Claims 18, 19, 20, 26 – 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the Kelly patent in view of Dassler (3,911,600). This rejection is also believed to be obviated by the present amendment. The recitation in parent independent claims 16 and 24, that the helical key and keyway define the **only** position of the spigot relative to the receptacle at the start of the insertion of the spigot into the socket, is not taught by either Kelly or Dassler. Accordingly, claims 18, 19, 20, 26 – 28, which depend from one or the other of claims 16 and 24, are patentable over Kelly and Dassler, taken individually or in combination.

Applicant acknowledges the allowance of claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8, 14 and 31 – 33.

It is believed that claims 3, 7, 9 – 13, 15, 21, 23 and 29 should be allowed in this application. The Examiner has withdrawn these claims from consideration as being based on non-elected species. However, there are now allowed claims in this application which are generic to the withdrawn claims. Specifically, claim 1 is generic to claims 3, 7, 9 – 13 and 15 which ultimately depend from claim 1; claim 16 is generic to claims 21 and 23 which ultimately depend from claim 16; and claim 24 is generic to claim 29 which ultimately depends from claim 24.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the subject application, with claims 1 – 33, is in condition for allowance and request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued.

Respectfully submitted,



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Hand-delivered: 1/ 16 /04